DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 420 184 FL 025 284

TITLE	Language Coordinators Resource Kit. Section Seven: Assessment.
INSTITUTION	Peace Corps, Washington, DC. Information Collection and Exchange Div.
REPORT NO	T0097
PUB DATE	1998-02-00
NOTE	62p.; The entire kit, and its ten separately analyzed sections, are FL 025 277-287.
CONTRACT	PC-896-0537
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Dialogs (Language); Interpersonal Communication; Interviews; Language Proficiency; *Language Tests; Portfolios (Background Materials); *Program Administration; Program Design; Public Agencies; Recordkeeping; Scheduling; Second Language Instruction; *Second Language Programs; *Second Languages; Self Evaluation (Individuals); Simulation; *Student Evaluation; *Testing; Testing Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Peace Corps

ABSTRACT

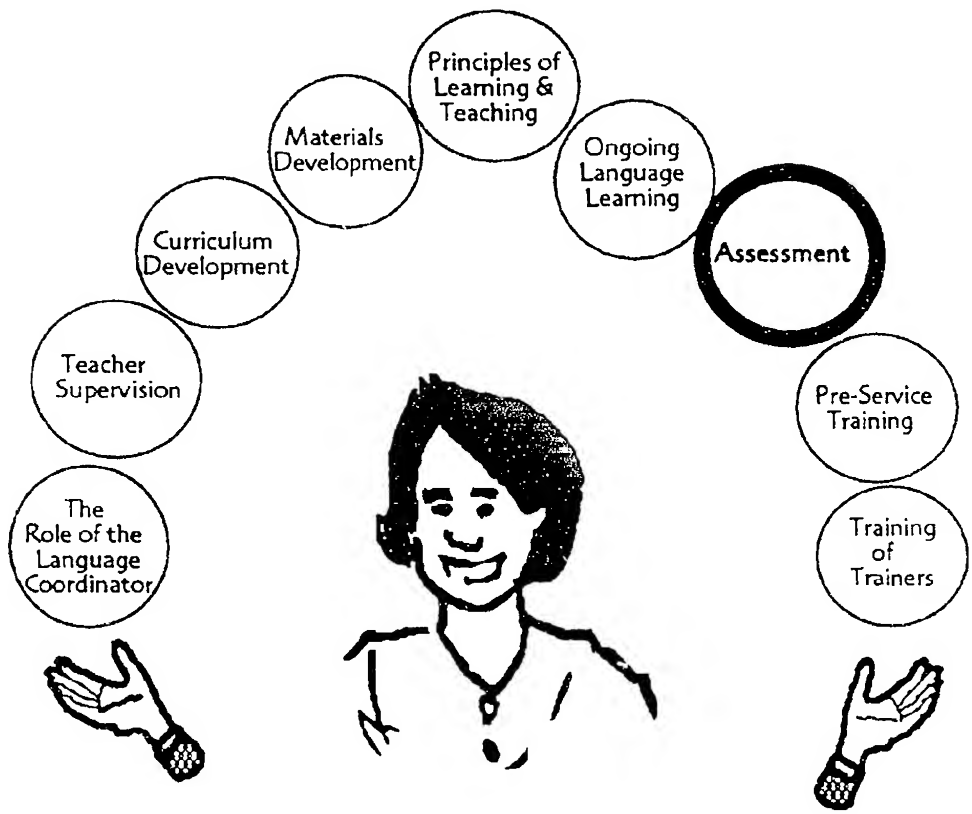
The guide is one section of a resource kit designed to assist Peace Corps language instruction coordinators in countries around the world in understanding the principles underlying second language learning and teaching and in organizing instructional programs. This section addresses assessment issues. An introductory chapter gives an overview of the guide and offers suggestions for identifying assessment needs for the language training program and for scheduling trainee assessment activities. The second chapter offers general information on planning assessment activities. The third chapter discusses forms of informal student assessment, including use of trainer logs, student self-assessment, simulations, individual conversations, community contact assignments, portfolios, and practice language proficiency interviews. The fourth chapter focuses on conducting the formal language proficiency interview, and answers frequently-asked questions about the test and tester training. (MSE)

LC RK

LANGUAGE COORDINATORS RESOURCE KIT

SECTION SEVEN

ASSESSMENT



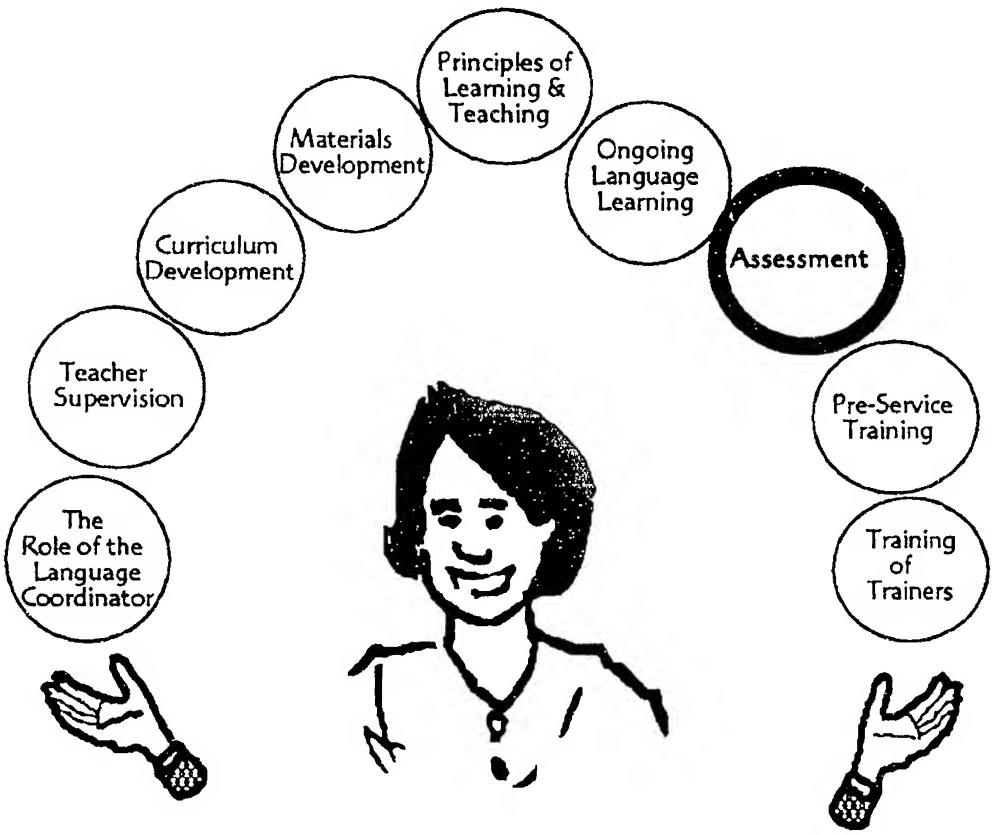
Peace Corps
Information Collection and Exchange (ICE)
ICE Publication Number T0097
February 1998

LC
RK

LANGUAGE COORDINATORS RESOURCE KIT

SECTION SEVEN

ASSESSMENT



Peace Corps
Information Collection and Exchange (ICE)
ICE Publication Number T0097
February 1998

INFORMATION COLLECTION AND EXCHANGE

Peace Corps' Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) makes available the strategies and technologies developed by Peace Corps Volunteers, their co-workers, and their counterparts to development organizations and workers who might find them useful. ICE collects and reviews training guides, curricula, lesson plans, project reports, manuals, and other Peace Corps-generated materials developed in the field. Some materials are reprinted "as is"; others provide a source of field-based information for the production of manuals or for research in particular program areas. Materials that you submit to ICE become part of the Peace Corps' larger contribution to development.

Information about ICE publications and services is available through

Peace Corps
Information Collection and Exchange
1990 K Street, NW - 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20526

Add your experience to the ICE Resource Center. Send your materials to us so that we can share them with other development workers. Your technical insights serve as the basis for the generation of ICE manuals, reprints, and training materials. They also ensure that ICE is providing the most up-to-date, innovative problem solving techniques and information available to you and your fellow development workers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Peace Corps acknowledges the special efforts of the following people in the writing, selection, compiling, editing, and design of the materials in this resource kit: Mihaela Bobeica, Joe Byrnes, Motomoke Eomba, Ana Maria Flecha, Douglas Gilzow, Daulat Karki, Zoya Lubenova, Dominik Lukes, Margaret Malone, Paz B. Meman, Simon Njure, William Perry, Larry Statan, Stephen Thewlis, and Silvia Valencia.

Prepared for Peace Corps under contract number PC-896-0537.

The Peace Corps also wishes to express its appreciation to the authors for permission to reprint the following: "The Language Learner's Proficiency Scale", © 1989 by Terry Marshall, from *The Whole World Guide to Language Learning*, published by Intercultural Press, Inc.; "Strategy Inventory for Language Learning", Version 5.1, © 1990 by Rebecca Oxford, from *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*, published by Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

LANGUAGE COORDINATORS RESOURCE KIT SECTION 7. ASSESSMENT

OVER VIEW

SECTION SEVEN: PEACE CORPS ASSESSMENT

FOUR KEY CONCEPTS IN PC LANGUAGE TESTING

The purpose of assessment is always to determine how a Trainee or Volunteer is progressing in learning the language or languages. To assess language progress we use both informal and formal assessment procedures (namely the Peace Corps Language Proficiency Interview). But no matter which procedures are used, your assessment activities should reflect four important principles.

1. THERE IS CLEAR PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

There are two basic purposes for assessment:
a. **Formative assessment** measures learners' progress so teaching will be appropriate.
b. **Summative assessment** measures learner's progress toward meeting program goals. Both kinds of assessment will be important for your program.

2. THERE ARE NO "SURPRISES" INVOLVED IN ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Trainees will clearly be told the following information.
a. **When** they will be tested;
b. **What content** they will be expected to have mastered;
c. **How they will be tested and evaluated**; what is the test and what are the test criteria;
d. **Why they are being tested**; what is the purpose of the testing activity and how the results will be used.

3. ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITY IS SHARED BETWEEN LEARNERS AND INSTRUCTOR

Both learner and teacher should be involved in the assessment process, and there should be a mix of activities involving both learner self-assessment and instructor assessment of learner performance.

- Learner self assessment
  - -formal (checklists)
  - -informal (journals)
  - -conferences with instructors
- Instructor's assessment
  - -competency checklists
  - -simulations, role plays
  - -conferences with learners
  - -homework, class participation

4. ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON MULTIPLE MEASURES

It's important to have a variety of ways to assess performance. Some different ways to measure proficiency are:
- Self assessments
- Teacher assessments
- Simulation/role play scores
- Formal test scores
- Tape recordings, writing samples

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment is formative . Its purpose is to measure Trainees' progress so teaching will be appropriate. Informal assessment can take place both in and out of the classroom.
- Classroom assessment includes assessment activities conducted in the language class, by the language trainer or Trainees.
- Non-classroom assessment includes activities that will allow the Trainee to practice speaking the language and to get feedback on their skill outside the classroom.

FORMAL ASSESSMENT PC LPI

Formal assessment is summative. Its purpose is to measures how well learner's have met program goals. The formal assessment tool is the Peace Corps Language Proficiency Interview (LPI), which is usually administered at the end of PST. A practice LPI can also be used for formative testing, and for giving trainees a clear idea about the "hows" and "whats" of the formal assessment process.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND COMPETENCY-BASED LANGUAGE TESTING

Traditional:	Competency-Based:
• Tests grammatical correctness	• Tests communicative competence
• Usually a pencil-and-paper activity	• Involves performing the competency
• Number grade based on correct answers	• More variety in grades
• Competition encouraged	• Cooperation encouraged
• Usually strictly timed	• More flexibility on time
• Learner evaluation private	• Learner evaluation shared with learner
• Tests individual only	• Evaluation may be based on group task

WHAT THIS SECTION CONTAINS

This section describes different kinds of assessment and provides descriptions of activities as well as tools for assessment that are currently successful in Peace Corps posts. This section discusses:
- how to plan assessment activities
- informal assessment activities to measure the progress of Trainees in developing communicative competency in the language or languages of the country
- formal assessment, including the PC LPI, the scale used, and its purpose

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

IDENTIFYING ASSESSMENT NEEDS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

Every post has a different set of things that need to be done to ensure that there is a well-developed assessment for language training. In some countries, the training program is well-established, and the post has many years of experience in developing language assessment activities and a well-trained and experienced group of evaluators. In other countries, ther may be little or no previous experience. And of course, every country is, at one time or anoth. "start-up country" where all the systems must be developed "from scratch."

In order to help you assess what things need to be done in your program, Peace Corps Language Coordinators developed this brief check list to help you determine what assessment needs there are in your program. For each of the fifteen items select the letter of the response that best describes curriculum development at your post:

A. Completed successfully
B. Completed, but needs revision
C. Not completed, and it needs to be done
D. Not completed, but not important at present

Items that you marked with a B or C will probably need further development.

ASSESSMENT NEEDS

FORMATIVE (INFORMAL) ASSESSMENT:

_____ 1. Our post has an established system for assessing specific language skills in the classroom.

_____ 2. There is a list of the specific activities or skills to be assessed.

_____ 3. Our post uses a combination of assessment activities (classroom/out-of- classroom, formal/informal).

_____ 4. There is a clear correlation between the curriculum, the instructional plan and the assessment systems.

_____ 5. There is an established list of assessment goals.

_____ 6. For each assessment goal there is a clear description of the rationale for the assessment (**why**), and the persons (**who**) will perform it.

_____ 7. For each assessment activity there is a system of scoring that is consistent and objective.

SUMMATIVE (FORMAL) ASSESSMENT:

_____ 8. Our post administers the PC LPI (formal assessment) to assess PCV general language proficiency.

_____ 9. Our post has a sufficiently large group of trained. certifies PC LPI testers who are available to administer the LPI.

_____ 10. All PC LPIs are tape-recorded in case of a rating dispute.

_____ 11. There is an established system for keeping track of scores.

_____ 12. There are clearly established systems for keeping track of scores and sending information on PCV scores to PC Washington.

_____ 13. There is a clearly developed system for who will explain the results, and how this information will be shared.

_____ 14. There is a clearly developed system for who will learn the results of the assessment and how the results will be explained.

_____ 15. The reasons for and implications of the PC LPI are clearly explained to everyone (tester, Language Coordinator, PCV, CD and language trainers).

_____ 16. There is a clearly developed system for how the results of the PC LPI will be used to evaluate Trainees.

_____ 17. The scale used to score the PC LPI (ACTFL Guidelines) are available to the PCV and PCTs.

TIME LINE

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE FOR TRAINEE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Peace Corps Language Coordinators have developed this suggested timeline for the major t... involved in assessment.

TRAINEE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES	
PRE-PST	• Select mock LPI testers. • Select LPI testers (check certification/recertification). • Present session on how to keep a log. • Organize community assignment. • Orientation on the assessment process in training.
DURING PST: **• START ON FIRST DAY AND CONTINUE**	• log
• START AFTER 2 WEEKS: THEN EVERY WEEK	• informal assessment activities • self assessment
• START AFTER 2 WEEKS: THEN 2 TO 4 TIMES DURING PST :	• simulations *(e.g.: first two days after they go on field trip, 3 days before LPI post visit & LPI)*
• AFTER 8 TO 10 WEEKS	• mock LPI • feedback for Trainee and staff

END OF PST	• Administer LPI.
BEGINNING OF SERVICE **• AFTER 5 TO 6 MONTHS OF SERVICE**	• self assessment • IST (formal LPI- optional)
• ONGOING, THROUGH OUT SERVICE	• language tutor • self-directed learning
• ONGOING --FROM THE FIRST WEEK OF PST THROUGHOUT SERVICE	• individual conversation • (guided to free conversation)
COS	LPI- voluntary

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

TRAINEE ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS

Language Coordinators are sometimes puzzled by the distinction between two terms which appear frequently in PC manuals and workshop handouts. The first is "assessment", which is the measurement of a some quality or characteristic. When you determine overall language proficiency, or whether Trainees can perform a particular competency, you are assessing their ability to do so. The second term is "evaluation." Evaluation involves making a judgment based on the assessments you have performed. Thus, Trainee evaluation is deciding on the suitability of a Trainee to be sworn in, based on a number of assessment activities which include not only language performance, but also technical expertise. The following discussion about the process of trainee assessment and evaluation is from The *PATS Training Supplement* , and uses "assessment" to refer to both actual assessment (measurement of skills) and evaluation (determination of suitability). Don't be confused!

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF TRAINEE ASSESSMENT?

The Trainee Assessment process is intended to allow Trainees and staff to mutually determine if it is in the best interest of the Peace Corps and the Trainee for that person to be sworn in as a Volunteer.

• Trainee Assessment is a *process*.. It is designed to help Trainees recognize their successes and pinpoint the skills they need to improve, and to help the training staff identify ways to assist the Trainees in attaining the training objectives. The procedure for assessment includes ongoing personal reflection and self- assessment by the Trainee, and informal conversations with staff and peers. It also includes a more formal procedure comprising a series of interviews with training and/or country staff members.

• The assessment process is a *required* component of the PST. This section provides both required and recommended guidelines for implementing the assessment process.

TRAINEE ASSESSMENT/ QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Every pre-service training program must have clearly defined qualification criteria with which to assess Trainees. These criteria must be based on the task analysis for each Volunteer assignment, and should include technical, language, cross-

culture and health/personal safety requirements.

• Concrete behavioral objectives and/or competencies must be developed so that Trainees' progress can be monitored and assessed throughout the PST, and so that final decisions regarding suitability for Volunteer service can be determined. Trainees' progress toward achieving training objectives and competencies should be well- documented and discussed with them on a regular basis.

• Trainees must receive an orientation to the Trainee assessment process. This should be done at the outset of training, both in writing and through discussion of the process in a training session. It is recommended that during this session the Trainees be involved in the development of the indicators against which they will be assessed and in determining how and when (periodically) their progress will be assessed. Often, the Trainee assessment process is combined with the PST evaluation process. In this way the Trainees feel that assessment and evaluation are "two-way streets" in which both Trainees and training staff are regularly assessed, in an agreed upon format, against established criteria.

TRAINEE FILES

The information collected on an individual Trainee should be kept in a file available to the individual Trainee. The files should be regularly reviewed with the Trainees as a means of providing feedback and monitoring progress. At the close of training, relevant material (Trainee language scores, personal goals and plans, recommendations for technical in-service training and documents showing intent for further language or technical studies) should be transferred into the Volunteers' permanent files with the country staff.

TRAINEE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A complete Trainee Assessment Process should include a clear and timely description of the assessment process, a consistent set of characteristics, and a consistent process for feedback and review

1. CLEAR AND TIMELY DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

During the first three days of training, the Trainee will be informed in writing and verbally (in the PST handbook or syllabus and reviewed during a training session) of the following:

• Qualification criteria
• The assessment process: when, who, what and why
• The consequences of non-achievement of criteria or violation of country- specific behavioral guidelines
• Grounds for Administrative Separation
• Training site-/country-specific behavioral guidelines
• The right of appeal in case of administrative separation

2. CONSISTENT SET OF CHARACTERISTICS

The assessment process has the following characteristics:
• The same process applies to all Trainees.
• The assessment process is based on a feedback model.
• The Trainees are actively involved in self assessment.
• The opportunity to modify behavior exists: Trainees receive feedback & concrete suggestions for improving behavior within a certain time frame.
• The criteria are easily monitored, realistic.
• The criteria and assessment results are available to the training staff and Trainee.
• Training staff are trained prior to PST in the Trainee assessment process.
• The process includes clear, accurate and objectively verifiable documentation.
• The process models professionalism and open communication.
• The process rewards positive behavior.
• The process builds confidence.
• The process is designed to de-select based on non-achievement of criteria.

3. CONSISTENT FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRESS REVIEWS

The framework for the assessment process must be agreed upon at the beginning of the PST. A successful model that can be used or adapted as necessary by the training staff and Trainees consists of a series of progress reviews between the Trainee and a member of the training staff. It is generally recommended that the Project Director and the Coordinators conduct the Progress Reviews and that the same training staff member meet with the same Trainee for each interview. Below is the purpose or focus of each of the interviews.

Initial Interview
• Get to know each other and establish a good rapport.
• Ask/answer Trainee's questions re: training, the assessment process, etc.

Mid-training Progress Review
(for second and third interviews)
• Discuss Trainee's self-assessment.
• Discuss staff members' assessment of Trainee's progress.
• Establish goals for continued Trainee development.

Final Interview
• Summation of previous interviews
• Overall assessment and recommendations for continued development at site
• Trainee's overall assessment of training

In order for this model to be effective, it is necessary for the Training Coordinators and the Project Director to review the progress of each Trainee prior to each interview. The progress report to the Trainee will integrate the Trainee's achievement in all areas of training. Likewise, the Trainee's self assessment should be communicated to all training

coordinators. In order to facilitate the effectiveness of the self-assessment process, each Trainee should be encouraged to keep a notebook or journal of his or her progress during the PST.

SUGGESTED TRAINEE LANGUAGE QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

To qualify for Volunteer service, the Trainee, upon completion of training, will:

- Demonstrate satisfactory achievement of critical language competencies as identified by each Peace Corps country program, based on the Project Plan, as defined in PST language objectives.
- Reach a minimum Language Proficiency Interview score , as determined by post/region.
- Produce a plan and demonstrate skills for continuing language learning at site.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU ORGANIZE YOUR ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

In assessing Trainees or Volunteers, it is important to follow a four-step assessment process: planning, collecting, rating and sharing results. If these four steps are not followed, the assessment may not be valid for the purpose you want.

PLANNING

- What activity or skill do I wish to assess?
- Why will this be assessed?
- Who will be assessed?
- Who will perform the assessment?
- What kind of assessment will I use?
- Do I have easy access to this assessment? Can I rate it properly?
- When will assessment occur (during/after or even before the activity)?
- How will I use the information I obtain from the assessment?
- How does the information I've collected fit into my instructional plan? Does it reflect the kind of curriculum used?

COLLECTING INFORMATION

- What information do I need to collect (formal assessment of general proficiency versus classroom assessment of a specific skill)?
- Why am I collecting this information?
- How many Trainees/PCVs will be assessed at a time?
- Who will assess them? Are these people qualified and do they understand the rating system?
- Where will assessment occur (in classroom/outside classroom/formal/informal)?
- How will I collect this information (paper, rating scale, etc.)?

RATING

• Who is rating/scoring the information? Do they understand the scale?
• For a formal assessment, is the information tape-recorded in case of a rating dispute?

REPORTING INFORMATION

• Why is this information being reported?
- Summative/ Formal- results of LPI
- Formative/ Informal- Trainees' achievement of classroom material
• Who will be told the results of the assessment? (Trainee, LC, LI, CD, other staff)
• Who will explain the results?
• When will the results be explained?
• How will the results be explained?

OVER VIEW

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

WHAT IS INFORMAL ASSESSMENT?

Informal assessment activities share a number of characteristics.

- They are formative. They are designed to measure learner progress so you can adjust your teaching plan, materials or techniques.
- They are ongoing. They take place regularly, perhaps as part of every class session.
- They are usually based on actual performance of PCVs learning the language.
- They should involve a mix of both learner self assessment and instructor assessment.
- They can occur both in and out of the classroom.

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT PROTOTYPE

This description of the informal assessment process from the Czech Republic outlines the general role that informal assessment plays in the language class:

"At the end of every language session, Trainees are expected to demonstrate language skill acquired during language class by performing a role play, or accomplishing a task assigned by the instructor. This task can take place either inside or outside the classroom. After the Trainee performs the task he or she fills out a self assessment form that consists of what the Trainee could do, could partially do or could not do and gives it back to the instructor, so he or she can help in the Trainee learning process. Because it is not always possible to give a Trainee an outside task, other activities such as role play, question-answer, quiz, simulation, presentation, and debate can be used."

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Informal assessment activities can really be any classroom activity that has been adapted to include a systematic "performance rating" by either the learner or the instructor, and a variety of assessment activities and techniques have been used in Peace Corps countries. Common activities are:

1. TRAINER ASSESSMENT FORMS Language trainers can keep a Trainee Logbook: a daily record for each Trainee, noting strong and weak areas. In many posts they use the logbook to write weekly or bi-weekly reports on each Trainee's language progress. They share this information with the Trainees, get Trainees' signature on the report, and submit it to the LC.

2. SELF ASSESSMENT FORMS Trainees can use a variety of formats (journals/ or logs) to chart their own progress. These can be rating forms for specific competencies that parallel the same scales used by instructors, or they can be more open-ended forms that Trainees use to identify their own questions, confusions, mistakes or areas for improvement.

3. SIMULATIONS Simulations are in-class techniques that replicate out-of-class situations. They involve a variety of possible techniques ranging from student-written dialogues to role plays to formal simulations. Typically students move through a series of "stations" where they are given a specific communicative task to accomplish, based on the particular competency being focused on. They can be assessed either by their language instructors, or "naive" native speakers who have been selected for the simulation.

4. COMMUNITY CONTACT ASSIGNMENT Community Contact Assignments involve any activity where Trainees are given the task of getting something from people outside of class. This can be one or more objects (such lists are called Scavenger hunts), or pieces of information. The people that they work with can be individuals from the community or a member of their host family. Trainee success is measured by whether or not they have been able to accomplish the task.

5. INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATION Using teachers, PST staff, and outsiders to serve as conversation partners is a useful way to give Trainees more opportunities for communication in real situations. Trainees are paried with another person. Instructors give the pair one or more topics to discuss and then observe and evaluate the Trainee's performance.

6. PORTFOLIOS A portfolio is a collection of work. For Peace Corps language programs, a portfolio kept during PST is an excellent way for language teachers and PC Trainees to keep track of progress throughout the program. Portfolios allow language trainers to record progress of their students throughout PST.

A portfolio can include any work of the Trainee that they or the language program want to include, such as results of language learning inventories, lists of Trainee's expectations, assessments by Trainees themselves or trainers, tape

recordings of the Trainee's speech, journal or log entries, etc. A more complete listed of possible contents is provided later in this section.

7. PRACTICE LPI The LPI is discussed in detail at the end of this section. You can use a practice LPI to be sure that Trainees are thoroughly informed about how their formal assessment will take place. It's also a good way to allay their anxiety about what happens during the PST.

PROS AND CONS OF TRAINING ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

NAME OF ACTIVITY	ADVANTAGES	DRAWBACKS
DAILY LOG OF TRAINEES' PROGRESS	• Can see the Trainees' progress •Identify Trainees' weaknesses •Provides concrete feedback •Provides good information when trainers are rotated	• Requires daily entries • Time consuming
SELF-ASSESS MENT CHECKLISTS	•Can identify Trainees' comfort area in language • Gives the Trainee information for improvement • Motivates Trainee to work harder • Shows Trainee points to review •Non•threatening •Supports self•directed learning	• Trainee may not give accurate picture of self
SIMULATION	• Allows Trainee hand•on experience • Shows Trainees experiences of real difficulties in communicating with host country nationals • Reviews material covered throughout training • Fun for Trainees •Develops Trainees' confidence in dealing with real situations	• Not the same as the real situation •Language staff often makes situations more difficult than in real life •Trainees are not comfortable, because they think they will be assessed • Hard to organize and implement

INDIVIDUAL CONVER-SATION	• Allows Trainees to practice outside of class and with different speakers • Reviews and reinforces learned material • Builds confidence in using target language • Increases fluency • Trainees can speak on any topic • Trainees can assess their language competency in the conversation • Helps direct self-learning • Breaks the routine	• Sometimes non-PC staff are needed for conversations • Non-PC staff may not understand Trainees' limitations • Finding enough conversants can be difficult • Time consuming
PORTFOLIO	• Gives a greater selection of assessment criteria • Shows progress over time • Gives concrete examples of progress • Gives a sense of real progress of time • Cumulative	• Not simple and direct • Hard to keep track of materials • requires serious thought by language coordinator and trainer • Must have clear purpose and guidelines for all involved
MOCK LPI	• Provides exposure to the PC LPI • Identifies strengths and weaknesses in target language • Allows language trainers to see LPI perspective on the language training • Supplies concrete information to Trainees from testers • Gives feedback from LPI tester to language staff • Provides mid-PST evaluation for language staff • Develops Trainee's motivation	• Time consuming • May be difficult to schedule testers' time • Trainee nervousness may affect their score • Perceived low scores may decrease Trainee motivation

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

These suggestions were provided by Peace Corps Language Coordinators to make your assessment activities more effective:

- Explain your assessment system and criteria to Trainees on the first day. Remind them often that you are using these systems and criteria.
- Provide a clear purpose for assessment activities.
- Purposes can include formative assessment, to measure progress in class, and summative assessment, which measures progress toward program goals.

• Trainees should know how, when and why they are being assessed, as well as with what materials and methods.
• Results of assessments should be shared with Trainees.
• Both learners and trainers should take responsibility for assessment through self-assessments, checklists and conferences.
• Use multiple measures! In other words, one activity or observation or interview is not enough information. Use different kinds of assessment activities.
• Assess informally often and keep notes consistently in the log or another place.
• All information should be kept in the Trainee's file for easy reference.
• Use consistent criteria to assess.
• Look at different classroom situations to encourage different speaking situations (trainer to Trainee, Trainees in pairs, Trainees in small groups).
• Provide honest feedback to Trainees throughout PST, both formally and informally; be direct in explaining how Trainee can improve. Provide specific, clear examples for the Trainee.
• Use clear and specific language in providing feedback .

OVER VIEW

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES, TECHNIQUES AND APPROACHES IN PRE-SERVICE TRAINING: A SUMMARY

A system for evaluating Trainees at the end of PST needs to include results from a proficiency measure (the Peace Corps LPI rating) and from achievement measures, such as simulations and teacher assessment of Trainees, as well as Trainee self-assessment. In this way, the final language evaluation reflects the goals of the language program, which should include not just a general skill level, but mastery of competencies determined to be necessary. Teachers should be able to document their assessments of student mastery of competencies with results from various assessment activities such as those described here. Their assessment of a Trainee, Trainee self-assessment, performance on a simulation test, along with the LPI score should provide reliable information about a Trainee's language capabilities.

COMPETENCY CHECKLIST

Description: The instructor keeps a simple checklist of competencies that are covered during the PST. This will include all the topics--telephone, food, transportation, etc. The teacher evaluates by checking a box to indicate whether the student can perform the competency or not, or how well the student is able to perform the competency.
When Used: It could be used daily/weekly or less frequently.
Purpose: The checklist provides instructors with a record of student performance which will be helpful in re-grouping. It keeps instructors and Trainees focused on the competencies rather than grammar accuracy or vocabulary as the goal of instruction
Criteria: For most competencies, the criteria are ability to complete the task with comprehensible language production and demonstration of understanding. Accuracy and cultural appropriateness are sometimes criteria also.
Rating System : Usually a simple, 3-point scale, for "The Trainee has not attempted the competency", "The Trainee has attempted the competency but still has difficulty", and "The Trainee has mastered the competency."
Constraints: The classroom performance of a competency may not accurately predict performance outside the classroom.

Advantages: It is simple and it is compatible with the principles of a competency-based approach.
Using Results: For re-grouping and evaluating student progress.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Description: The Trainees evaluate themselves using forms, notebo ks, or journals.
When Used: This technique may be used at the middle and end of PST for summative purposes, but can be used throughout as a way to encourage learners to monitor their own progress.
Purpose: Provide Trainees with an opportunity to assess their own strengths and weaknesses, help them develop more realistic ability to monitor their own progress.
Criteria: For most competencies, the criteria are ability to complete the task with comprehensible language production and demonstration of understanding. Other criteria can be set with the Trainees' input as practice in setting learning goals.
Rating System: A simple, 3-point scale, for poor, average and excellent for a competency checklist. A verbal narrative can also be used.
Constraints: Trainees may give unrealistic scores.
Advantages: The Trainees are actively involved in the assessment of their own progress, not just subjected to tests by others. They will later have an opportunity to compare their rating with the instructors and can gain a better sense of their own skill level.
Using Results: The results are used as the subject of the teacher/trainer conference and may help the Trainees set goals for themselves. They may also be included in a final assessment.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEE

Description: Teacher assessment of Trainee is the information that the teacher has gathered through several means: tests, class behavior, observed progress, group work, etc.
When Used: At some posts teachers assess Trainees whenever teachers rotate, which may be weekly. Other posts do it daily; still others do this at mid-PST and at the end. If done daily, the information is oral only. If weekly or less frequently, it is in written form.
Purpose: Teachers assess to monitor Trainee's progress and provide the "new' teacher with information needed to adapt instruction quickly to the new learner.
Criteria: The categories usually included are: strengths, weaknesses, noticed learning style or preferences, needs improvement or needs more practice with ______ , class behavior, and feelings.
Rating system: There is no formal set of scoring conventions, but learners may be described as fast or slow learners and categorized as basic, intermediate or advanced in their language skills.
Constraints: It is rather subjective, since it represents a kind of synthesis that the teacher creates . The oral version may

be even more subjective than the written because there is less of an imposed structure.
Advantages: The advantage is that it gives the teacher useful information about the learners' levels and provides advance information on the learners to be taught.
Using Results: Teacher assessments contribute to decisions about grouping according to level and learning style and for helping teachers when working on a common lesson plan.

Sample Format from PC Romania: Weekly Teacher Assessment of Trainee
Name of Trainee ______________________________

Periods of Time	Strengths	Weaknesses	Learning Style	Needs Support
Week Seven	acquires vocab rapidly	pronunciation	visual	more repetitions

TRAINEE/ TEACHER CONFERENCES

Description: During a conference, the teacher and learner can review the following in English:
• What learning strategies have you tried? What is working and what is not working for you?
• How do you feel about your language study?
• Are you using the language in the community?
• How relevant are the competencies covered in class to the realities of language use in the community?
• What goals can you set to improve your language skills?
Hints: These conferences will be most successful if
• The instructor and the learner compare the learner's and teacher's assessment of progress.
• The instructor is comfortable--despite cultural barriers--in giving and receiving both negative and positive feedback.
When Used: Varies from every week to every three or four weeks.
Purpose: Gathers information about the Trainee's progress and perception of progress.
Constraints: There may be cultural barriers involved in giving and receiving feedback.
Advantages. It is a friendly talk with no grades, so it contributes to an atmosphere of openness in the PST and lets the Trainee know that the teacher is trying to help, but expects the Trainee to take responsibility as well.
Using Results: These conferences are useful for modifying instruction, monitoring attitudes and gathering information for the next teacher.

COMMUNITY CONTACT ASSIGNMENTS

Description: This technique requires the performance of language competencies in the community. It can be used as a formative test, that is a regular part of language instruction, and as a summative test, which occurs at the end of a unit of instruction. In this activity, Trainees receive clear directions and description of a task, e.g., to find a place, object or person;to interview someone, to buy an item at a market or

store, to send a letter, etc. They must then perform the task in a given time frame.

When Used: For formative testing, it can be used very often. As a summate testing technique after a phase of the training.

Purpose: Community assignments provide Trainees with an opportunity to build confidence and comfort with the language as they assess their own strengths and weaknesses through actual experience. They combine cross-culture content with language also and provide a way to test in non-simulated, outside the classroom setting.

Criteria: For formative assessment, one criterion is successful completion of the task. There may be a requirement to try various communication strategies, for example. Among the criteria when used in summative testing are comprehensibility, pronunciation, grammar accuracy, and cultural appropriateness.

Rating System: As a formative measure, it should be noted whether the task was completed and whether it was done with ease or with difficulty. As a summative measure, different scoring scales are used. Each evaluator receives a sheet with criteria and scale and a sheet with an explanation of each mark. Either teachers or others may act as observers. Self-assessment is usually a feature in community assignments.

Constraints: It is possible for a Trainee to pretend to have completed the task, but really not have done it. It is time-consuming. Interviewees in the community need to be arranged ahead of time.

Advantages: The circumstances are natural. The communication with native speakers is realistic. There is an absence of exam stress, though many competencies are covered.

Using Results: The results are used as the subject of the teacher/trainer conference and provide material for later lessons.

WRITTEN TESTS

Description: This could be any test which is presented to the student in written form. The test may assess the student's reading skills (as with CLOZE) or writing skills (writing activity).

• The **CLOZE** is a text with every 7th or 8th word omitted and the learner must fill the blank with an acceptable word. A variation is to omit only items of one grammatical category, such as prepositions, and have students supply these.

• **Multiple choice** is a kind of test in which the blank in each sentence must be filled by one of four items which have been indicated by the test maker. Only one of the items is correct; the others are only distracters. The items may be in a text or in a list of sentences.

• Common Peace Corps **writing activities** include having students write short messages to a counterpart, landlady, or maintenance person. The task should be based on a genuine

communication need and not an artificial exercise.
When Used: How often written tests are given depends on the curriculum at any post. Posts where there is a non-Latin alphabet, writing tests may be used weekly. Where the Latin alphabet is used, written tests are usually included only during the mid-PST and final assessments. If the language is generally not written, there should be no use of written tests for language assessment purposes.
Purpose: Written tests check writing and reading skill levels. As teaching devices, they also may provide students with models of structures in use, thus helping them study and organize language material.
Criteria: The criteria for scoring depend on the type of test. CLOZE and multiple choice tests usually stress accuracy, but in writing notes and messages, the main criterion is usually comprehensibility rather than correctness.
Rating System: For CLOZE and multiple choice tests, the scale can be based on the number correct vs. the number wrong. For writing tasks, a three-level scale can be used:
1 HIGH rich vocabulary, few repetitions, appropriate structures, clear message
2 MID correct but limited vocabulary, few grammar errors, understandable message
3 LOW few words, many errors, unclear message
Constraints: The main focus in most language programs is on spoken language rather than written, so these techniques are of limited relevance.
Advantages: The results are clear and easy to interpret.
Using Results: The results will be used in giving feedback, to readjust teaching, and as part of Trainee evaluation.

SIMULATIONS

Description: For simulations, the teachers set up the simulation stations (e.g., shop, party, or telephone) that closely resembles the real life situations. Realia and visuals contribute to the setting. As for the assessment itself, each Trainee goes through all stations in the simulation. At each one, the Trainee draws a card which describes a task involving some form of communication with a teacher who assumes the appropriate role for the station.
When Used: Simulations are used at mid-PST and at the end of it as a final assessment. Perhaps because of their complexity, simulations are not used more frequently than twice per PST.
Purpose: Simulations are used to gather information about the Trainee's ability to use the language (especially speaking and listening) to perform competencies in the curriculum.
Criteria: Among the criteria used are: fluency, comprehensibility, accuracy, completion of the task, vocabulary use, and cultural appropriateness.
Rating System: There are several alternatives for scoring and grading. One possibility is to use a scale for overall performance. After completing the task, the Trainee receives

a grade and a description summarizing the general level of the performance. Another possibility is to score each language area separately. In this case the Trainee may receive several grades, such as 5 for fluency, 4 for grammar, 4 for pronunciation, etc. Grades should be followed up with discussion with the coordinator or instructor. A third alternative is that rather than giving grades, the evaluator might write a friendly letter to the Trainee about the performance, praising strong areas and suggesting areas that need improvement. Self-assessment can also be used effectively in simulations.

Constraints: Preparation is time-consuming. It is difficult to staff the stations with two instructors per station, but it is also difficult for one instructor to act as both an evaluator and an actor in the simulation. Simulations are still not entirely lifelike. In addition, simulations have been unsuitable for some shy Trainees. The result can be just a repetition of a dialog.

Advantages: It is generally less stressful than other measures. Evaluator/Trainee conferences afterwards have proven useful.

Using Results: The results are shared among language staff and distributed to the Trainees. In some cases, the Language Coordinator has conferences with each Trainee to help them be more aware of their progress. At many posts, simulations are used as mid-term and final assessments of Trainees' ability to carry out competencies, a measure of their achievement of those goals.

Variation: In Moldova, the evaluators were not Peace Corps staff. They were provided with assessment sheets and observed and evaluated performance. This allowed the teachers to be fully involved in the activities. In this case, the results may have been more objective, also. In the Philippines each Trainee carries a cassette recorder and taped each interaction The tapes were later assessed by the Trainee and the teacher as they listened together.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE

Description: In many Spanish-speaking posts, Trainees give a public demonstration or talk on a technical topic. Host families and other people living near the training site may be invited. Trainees prepare their presentations with their technical trainers as well as their language instructors. It may also be a more light-hearted combination of variety show, contest, and game, such as the "language Olympics." which was done in the Philippines.

When Used: After four to six weeks at the earliest.

Purpose: Giving a performance provides Trainees with an opportunity to go beyond the required competencies and demonstrate their creativity with the language, possibly in their technical area.

Criteria: Among the criteria used are: fluency, comprehensibility, accuracy, vocabulary use, creativity and cultural appropriateness.
Rating System: Using a scale of 1-5 or 1-10, the activities could be judged by language or tech teachers or people not on staff . Self-assessment can be used in this activity.
Constraints: Among the constraints are finding enough time for the Trainees to prepare and finding a suitable place for having the activities.
Advantages: Competencies are combined, training areas are integrated, and it is a genuine communication situation.
Using Results: The results are used as part of the final rating of the Trainee and making recommendation for further study.

ORAL INTERVIEWS

Description: Most oral interviews involve a face-to-face conversation between a Trainee and an instructor for at least five minutes up to 10 minutes for more fluent learners. The interview may be formal or informal. During informal interviews, the instructor could help the learner with a little translation, key words, or gestures. In a more formal interview it may be possible to use a tape-recorder. Another variation is to send Trainees out to interview people in the community (who have been arranged in advance) as in a contact assignment. These could also be tape-recorded.
When Used : Formal interviews are done just a few times during PST, usually at the middle and end.
Purpose : Taped interviews provide a genuine record of student performance. Less formal interviews can help Trainees gain confidence and provide instructors with information on individual needs. Community contact interviews can provide information on competency mastery.
Criteria: If the interviews are structured to test competencies, the criteria are ability to complete the task with comprehensible language production, and for more formal ones, such as thanking a host at a formal dinner, accuracy may be more important. Cultural appropriateness is sometimes a criterion also. In general, a combination of fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility are the criteria.
Rating System: Interviews can be rated using a 3-level scale, for excellent, satisfactory, poor; or "speaks with ease", "speaks with difficulty", "cannot answer".
Constraints: Formal interviews, especially tape-recorded interviews, may make some learners become tense and give poor performances.
Advantages: Most basic competencies are oral ones, so this technique is quite relevant.
Using Results: Results are used for evaluating student progress, mastery of competencies, and to provide useful feedback and suggestions.

HOW TO DO IT

TRAINER LOGS AND PROGRESS CONFERENCES

This is a description of one method for collecting, keeping and reporting the information from a trainer log.

OBJECTIVES

To identify the Trainee's strengths and weaknesses in language learning.

PROCEDURES

- The language trainer keeps a daily record of the Trainee's problem areas, or weaknesses, and outstanding areas, or strengths in the target language. For example, the language trainer might highlight pronunciation, conjugation, post position, word order, vocabulary, fluency, use of structures, reading, and writing as areas of strength and weakness for the Trainee.
- Every ten days or two weeks, the trainer writes up a description of each student in his/her class's language progress. This progress report is based on the log book the trainer has kept.
- The trainer shares his progress report with the Trainees and gives feedback. The trainer discusses the feedback with each Trainee and helps the Trainee to develop strategies/plans to build on strengths and address weaknesses. If the Trainee disagrees on some issues in the progress report, she/he can write his/her disagreement on the progress report. After discussion, the Trainees and the trainer both sign the progress report and submit it to the LC.

RECORD KEEPING

The progress report is kept in the Trainee's confidential file. When trainers rotate, they can read each Trainee's file, including the daily logbook and the biweekly or ten-day progress report. This way, all the trainers can share information about Trainees as they rotate into different trainer's groups.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

These suggestions were provided by Peace Corps Language Coordinators for ways to make trainer logs easier to use and more effective:

- Organize it by examples provided by language coordinator to reflect the your beliefs on language learning.
- Set aside time to write in log every day for every group with whom you work.
- Use specific examples (for example, instead of "bad pronunciation," write, "difficulty in pronouncing *kh* and other aspirated sounds."
- Write up progress conference notes and hold formal meeting every ten days or two weeks.
- Review previous days' work to provide context.
- Make sure you use a variety of activities for the log (e.g., role plays *and* simulations *and* conversations).
- If possible, keep back-up records on a computer.
- Keep log in a language understood by all other trainers.

HOW
TO DO IT

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORMS

PURPOSES AND FORMATS

Self-assessment forms can serve a variety of uses .
• First, you can use it as part of the process to assess **what** Trainees can do: how well they perform the competencies of your program. For this purpose, self-assessments can be forms that are parallel to ones being used by trainers rating the Trainee's performance. Both trainer and Trainee fill out the form and compare their perceptions of Trainee's performance.
• Another use of self-assessment forms is more open-ended, and can help you assess **how** Trainees are going about the process of self-directed language learning. For this purpose, self-assessments can take the form of a log or journal designed to provide a specific format for promoting Trainee reflection and goal setting. Trainees use the format to reflect on such issues as what language learning strategies they are using, what problems they are encountering, or what specific information about language structure, vocabulary, etc. they feel they need to know. This kind of self-assessment form is discussed in more detail in Section 6 (Ongoing Language Learning) of this Resource Kit.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

Parallel formats for rating performance:
• Provide and review needed materials *before* distributing.
• Describe self-assessment procedures *clearly* to Trainees before any activities that involve self-assessment (simulation, community contact assignment).
• Provide feedback to Trainees on the validity of their answers to self-assessments .
• Provide post-activity review and processing as a group.
Open-ended formats for reflecting on language learning:
• Provide information about ongoing self-directed learning and learning strategies training as part of PST and IST.
• Explain objectives of assessment of self-directed learning activities to Trainees.
• Follow up on self-assessments regularly. Do consistent and frequent review of self-assessments with Trainees.
• Point Trainees to the self-directed learning modules that correspond to their level.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

GENERAL SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

Here's an example of a self-assessment form from Peace Corps Nepal. You may also want to refer to the section on Materials Development to see other self-assessment statements that have been integrated into the language teaching materials.

Self Assessment Form
Language Training

Trainee Name: ____________________

Please mark(\ ) mark where you feel confident in the following language competencies

Competencies	Can do very well	Can do well	Can do with much difficulty	Cannot do
1. Ask and give daily PST schedule.				
2. Ask and give direction in Nepali.				
3. Ask and give directions to a place.				
4. Ask and give days of the week.				
5. List parts of the body.				
6. Ask and give the condition of the trail.				
7. Tell physical condition.				
8. Tell simple future plan.				
9. Ask about transportation & buy ticket.				
10. Ask about lodging while on trail.				
11. Identify major live stock in Nepali.				
12. Identify major field crops and amount of land.				
13. Make a small talk or describe a recent experience.				
14. Describe nursery bed construction.				

15. Ask about appropriate time and place for washing hand, bathing, laundry and charpi.				
16. Ask and explain how to protect seedlings in nursery.				
17. Ask politely if water has been boiled and plates & utensils has been dried or not.				
18. Identify community group and working with them.				
19. Give simple complement about food, clothes and behavior.				
20. Ask and list Nepali months.				
21. Apologize for unintentionally upsetting family members or PST staff.				
22. Ask and explain how to conserve soil.				
23. Describe kitchen gardening in Nepal.				
24. Talk about differences in family life between USA & Nepal.				
25. Talk about some particular festivals in USA & Nepal.				
26. Describe measurement system in Nepali.				
27. Talk about different weather between USA & Nepal.				
28. Simple present conjugation.				
29. Present Perfect				
30. Simple past conjugation.				
31. Habitual Past				
32. Literacy- reading. 33. - writing				
34. Number				

Want to review on the competency No:-

Other comments:-

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM FOR TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

These two self-assessment forms from Peace Corps Bulgaria focus on specifying the technical competencies of small business development and education volunteers. It's useful to notice the similarities and differences between the two sets of competencies.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
TECHNICAL LANGUAGE
Competency Checklist

Rate the level of competency achievement:
1= very poor, 2= poor, 3= fair, 4= good, 5 = excellent

I am able to:

1. Greet people formally	1	2	3	4	5
2. Make / Respond to formal introduction	1	2	3	4	5
3. Talk about one's own and others' background	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ask /Answer social questions	1	2	3	4	5
5. Make polite remarks	1	2	3	4	5
6. Make formal invitations	1	2	3	4	5
7. Accept invitations	1	2	3	4	5
8. Decline invitations	1	2	3	4	5
9. Say "No" politely	1	2	3	4	5
10. Explain hierarchy at work	1	2	3	4	5
11. Understand titles	1	2	3	4	5
12. Use titles appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
13. Ask for help	1	2	3	4	5
14. Respond to requests for help	1	2	3	4	5
15. Set up work rules	1	2	3	4	5
16. Set work schedule and timetables	1	2	3	4	5
17. Identify office equipment	1	2	3	4	5
18. Ask for / Give instructions	1	2	3	4	5
19. Ask for / Give locations	1	2	3	4	5
20. Describe PC role in Bulgaria	1	2	3	4	5
21 Talk about PC initiatives in Bulgaria	1	2	3	4	5
22. Identify own job in PC	1	2	3	4	5
23. Make request about using the phone	1	2	3	4	5
24. Ask for connection	1	2	3	4	5
25 Identify yourself and your company	1	2	3	4	5

26. Ask the caller to identify himself / herself	1	2	3	4	5
27. Explain the reason for the call	1	2	3	4	5
28. Make an appointment	1	2	3	4	5
29. Confirm an appointment	1	2	3	4	5
30. Leave a message	1	2	3	4	5
31. Give information about one's own educational and professional background	1	2	3	4	5
32. Ask for information about other's background	1	2	3	4	5
33. Talk about own career plans	1	2	3	4	5
34. Understand behavioral reactions of local officials and businessmen	1	2	3	4	5
35. React appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
36. Deal with unexpected circumstances due to different cultural norms	1	2	3	4	5

EDUCATION VOLUNTEERS
TECHNICAL LANGUAGE
Competency Checklist

Rate the level of competency achievement:
1= very poor, 2= poor, 3= fair, 4= good, 5 = excellent

I am able to:

1. Greet people formally	1	2	3	4	5
2. Make / Respond to formal introduction	1	2	3	4	5
3. Talk about one's own and others' background	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ask /Answer social questions	1	2	3	4	5
5. Make polite remarks	1	2	3	4	5
6. Make formal invitations	1	2	3	4	5
7. Accept invitations	1	2	3	4	5
8. Decline invitations	1	2	3	4	5
9. Say "No" politely	1	2	3	4	5
10. Explain hierarchy at work	1	2	3	4	5
11. Understand titles	1	2	3	4	5
12. Use titles appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
13. Identify school documentation	1	2	3	4	5
14. Ask questions about school schedule	1	2	3	4	5
15. Set up work rules	1	2	3	4	5
16. Set work schedule and timetables	1	2	3	4	5
17. Describe PC role in Bulgaria	1	2	3	4	5
18. Talk about PC initiatives in Bulgaria	1	2	3	4	5
19. Identify own job in PC	1	2	3	4	5
20. Make request about using the phone	1	2	3	4	
21. Ask for connection	1	2	3	4	5
22. Ask the caller to identify himself / herself	1	2	3	4	5
23. Explain the reason for the call	1	2	3	4	5
24. Make an appointment	1	2	3	4	5
25. Confirm an appointment	1	2	3	4	5
26. Leave a message	1	2	3	4	5
27. Give information about one's own educational and professional background	1	2	3	4	5
28. Ask for information about other's background	1	2	3	4	5
29. Talk about own career plans	1	2	3	4	5

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM FOR COMMUNITY SIMULATIONS

Here's an example of a Self-Assessment form from Peace Corps Philippines.

PEACE CORPS PHILIPPINES
COMMUNITY SIMULATION
Self-Assessment

I. Using the scale below, rate your ;elf according to the following:

a) How much you understand/comprehend the language in the different given situations.

b) How much and how well you were able to express yourself in the Target Language

5 - Excellent 2 - Fair
4 - Very Good 1 - Poor
3 - Satisfactory

Situations	Ability to comprehend the TL	Ability to express oneself in the TL
1. Buying at a *sari-sari* store	______	______
2. Buying at a market	______	______
3. Ordering a meal in the *carinderia* (local restaurant)	______	______
4. Consulting a doctor	______	______
5. Talking with the host family	______	______
6. Making arrangements at the Booking Office	______	______
7. Playing at the *PASUGALAN* (Bingo, card games, Mahjong)	______	______
8. Availing services from the beauty parlor/barber shop	______	______
9. Claiming a lost item from the police station	______	______
10. Buying/eating *balot*	______	______
11. Responding to the *pulubi* (beggar)	______	______

II. Other Comments/Suggestions

HOW TO DO IT

SIMULATIONS

WHAT ARE SIMULATIONS?

A simulation is any activity which replicates a real communication situation that would occur in the "outside world." These can be role plays (such as making small talk on the bus), tasks (such as shopping for food) or other things (such as explaining the goals of Peace Corps to a group of farmers).

OBJECTIVES

You can use simulations for a number of purposes:
- To review materials covered
- To apply class room studies
- To assess students' communication skill
- To let Trainees assess themselves in a particular language area

PROCEDURES

- Organizing Simulations:

Students are asked to perform appropriately in a number of different situations or topic areas. These might be specific competencies, such as bargaining for a lower price, or topic areas such as getting directions, shopping, socializing, or technical competencies like meeting with villagers or host country officials. Once the trainer has given the Trainees an orientation about the simulation and given them written tasks, groups of trainees move through the various stations. One group will start at a time. There will be four Trainees in one group. After every forty minutes the next group will start.

- Performing Simulations:

Each Trainee should spend 10 minutes at each station. After 10 minutes the bell will ring and Trainees should move on to the next station.

- Processing Simulations:

After Trainees have the completed the tasks in all stations they will be provided with a self assessment form, they will fill out self-assessment form to fill out.

When the self evaluation form is filled out, one trainer will process the simulations with that group.

After the activity the LC will review the self-assessments and ask for feedback from the Trainees.

• **Alternative Processing:**
The LC collects assessment checklists from the station person and has individual conferences with each Trainee to share feedback and help Trainees to develop strategies to overcome weak areas.

TRAINER PREPARATION

Trainers need to do the following things to ensure the success of any simulation:
• Prepare orientation to the staff about their role and responsibility.
• Collect all the materials needed for the simulation.
• Prepare Trainee self assessment and evaluation checklist.
• Prepare task sheets.
• Prepare different task for one station.
• Find the location for simulation.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

These suggestions were provided by Peace Corps Language Coordinators for ways to make simulations easier to use and more effective.
•It's important to do all these things well ahead of time:
• Orient staff about their roles and responsibilities for the simulation activity.
• Be sure you have all materials needed for the simulation.
• Prepare Trainees' for self assessment checklists.
• Identify and prepare location for simulation.
These should all be done **several days** ahead of time in case you find that something is not available.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

ASSESSMENT SIMULATIONS

Simulations involve developing at least three different pieces of material: Trainee tasks/scenarios, Trainee self-assessment checklists, and trainer assessment checklists. This set of simulation materials was developed by Peace Corps Nepal.

SIMULATION SCENARIOS	
A. MEETING WITH TRAINER'S FRIEND	Go to your trainer's (Ram's) house. Your trainer is not at home. Introduce yourself and ask for an introduction from him. Ask for information about his family members, their ages, educational background, occupation and marital status.
B. HOST FAMILY	You are staying with a host family. When you go home, your host father is waiting for you. Since you have recently visited your workplace, your host father wants to know about your post visit. Explain to him where it is, how you got there, the climate at your post, the kinds of food available there, and how you feel about your post.
C. VISIT A RELATIVE OF YOUR HOST FAMILY	One of your host family's relatives have invited you for lunch. You are inadvertently one-half hour late. After greeting them, apologize for being late. Next, your host family's relatives serve you some food. Inquire about the food. There is some food you do not want to eat. Ask your host sister to take out some of the food and explain why you don't like that kind of food. Make small talk with your host brother/sister about some of the differences between American and Nepali culture.
D. SITA'S HOUSE (COMMUNITY HEALTH VOLUNTEERS ONLY)	Sita is one of the village women who has six children. You go to visit her and find that one of her daughters, who is two, is very sick. She has a fever. Ask Sita what is wrong with her daughter and express sympathy that she is sick. Ask Sita if the child has received all the immunizations/ vaccinations. If not, give her advice. Ask her if she is using a family planning method and, if not, explain to her about different family planning methods and their importance.

E. RAMILA'S HOUSE (URBAN BASIC SERVICE VOLUNTEERS ONLY)	Ramila is a poor urban woman. As a UBS Volunteer, you want to help her. You go to her and introduce yourself and explain your job. Ask her about family planning methods she uses. Find out if her children are immunized and give her some advice on immunization. Inquire about the education facility in the community.

TRAINEE'S SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

	I can do very well	I can do to some extent	I cannot do
A. Meeting with trainers friend			
- Asking for introduction			
- Introduce self			
- Asking information about others age, marital status and family members			
- Discussing one's age, marital status and other family members			
- Inquiring and telling about education and occupation			
B. In own room			
- Giving direction of own post			
- Giving information about transportation for the post			
- Describing about the climate of the post			
- Reporting availability of food, fruits, etc. in your post			
- Expressing feelings about the post			
C. Visit Relative of the host family			
1. Apologizing for being late			
2. Inquiring about served food			
3. Refusing food and giving reasons			
4. Describing differences between Nepali and American Culture			
D. Host Family:			
- Telling training house activities			
- Requesting to go to a movie			
- Explaining that you are not eating dinner tonight with reasons			
E. Sita's House (CHV):			
1. Expressing sympathy			
2. Asking what is wrong with the baby			
3. Asking about immunization and give some advice			
4. Asking the number of family			
5. Explaining the importance of and different methods for family planning that they have been using			

F. Ramila's House (UBS):			
1. Getting family background			
2. Asking about family planning methods			
3. Asking if their child was immunized and give advice for immunization			
4. Asking questions on health			
5. Asking about educational facilities in the community			

Objectives Checklist for Trainer

Trainer will check at what percent he accomplished the objectives.

A. Meeting with trainers friend **Very good Good Poor**

1. Asking for introduction
2. Giving introduction
3. Asking information about others age, marital status and family member
4. Responding about one's age, marital status and family members
5. Inquiring and responding about education and occupation

B. Host Father Conversation **Very good Good Poor**

1. Giving direction of own post
2. Giving information about transportation for the post
3. Describing about the climate of the post
4. Reporting availability of food, fruits, etc. in your post
5. Expressing feelings about the post

C. Visit relative of the host family **Very good Good Poor**

1. Apologizing for being late
2. Inquiring about served food
3. Refusing the food giving reason
4. Telling difference between Nepali and American Culture

D. Host Family: **Very good Good Poor**

1. Telling training house activities
2. Requesting to go to see movie
3. Explain that you are not eating dinner tonight giving reasons

E. Sita's House (CHV): **Very good Good Poor**

1. Expressing sympathy
2. Asking what is wrong with the baby
3. Asking about immunization and giving some advice
4. Asking the number of family
5. Telling the importance of family planning and different methods of family planning that they have been using

F. Ramila's House (UBS): **Very good Good Poor**

1. Getting family background
2. Asking about family planning methods that she has been using
3. Asking if their children were immunized and give advise for immunization
4. Asking questions on health
5. Asking about educational facility in the community

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

RATING SHEETS FOR OTHER SIMULATION SCENARIOS

Here are sample rating sheets that can be used by both trainers and Trainees to compare their perceptions on how well Trainees performed in the following situations. The rating sheets for each station are printed separately and filled out. At the end of the simulation the forms are collected and organized by name of Trainee to prepare for the individual feedback conference.

SIMULATION STATIONS - EVALUATION- WEEK 6
Rating scale: 1- Poor; 2 - Fair; 3 - Satisfactory; 4 - Very satisfactory; 5 - Excellent.

Station1 - Socializing at a Party: **LI**___________________

TRAINEE___________________	**Ability to comprehend**	**Ability to express self**
• greet people	________	________
• introduce oneself	________	________
• talk about one of your friends	________	________
• respond to questions on personal background: name, country of origin, profession, family relations, marital status, age	________	________
• name and locate rooms and items in a house	________	________

Station 2 - Shopping for Food: LI________________

TRAINEE______________________

	Ability to comprehend	**Ability to express self**
• select food (container, quantity, quality, price)	________	________
• express preferences	________	________
• ask the price of selected items	________	________
• pay for food (identify and request correct amount of change for a purchase)	________	________

Station 3 - Eating Out: LI________________

TRAINEE______________________

	Ability to comprehend	**Ability to express self**
• order food at a restaurant	________	________
• express food preferences	________	________
• ask for the bill and pay the bill	________	________
• cancel a wrong order	________	________
• express compliments	________	________

Station 4- Orientation in the Street: LI________________

TRAINEE______________________

	Ability to comprehend	**Ability to express self**
• ask and tell the time	________	________
• ask about directions to a place	________	________
• give directions to a place	________	________
• follow simple directions	________	________

Station 5- At the Railway Station: LI________________

TRAINEE______________________

	Ability to comprehend	**Ability to express self**
• ask about bus/train fares	________	________
• read train schedules	________	________
• reserve a seat, buy a ticket	________	________
• ask for help, explanations on the trip (departure/arrival time, where to get off)	________	________

HOW
TO DO IT

INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATIONS

RATIONALE

There are several advantages to having Trainees converse one on one with a native speaker whom they don't know well. For example, teachers get used to hearing the target language as spoken by Trainees. Because of this, teachers often can understand Trainees despite pronunciation problems or inaccurate use of the language which would make them incomprehensible to another listener. Other advantages are listed in the overview to informal assessment activities earlier in this section.

PROCEDURES

Trainees are matched one-on-one with a native speaker and they have a conversation. It may be helpful for you to provide suggestions on what to talk about, or even explicit directions on how to achieve one of the competencies you have been practicing. However, the basic purpose of the individual conversation is to allow for an open-ended conversation that will reflect the interests and abilities of the participants, Therefore, you don't want to structure it too much.

- You may choose to have trainers observe and evaluate the Trainees performance, but it's also important to let the native speaker give you an idea of what he or she thought of the Trainee's proficiency, too. As with all Peace Corps assessment activities, it's important to give the Trainees an opportunity to rate their own performance.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

These suggestions were provided by Peace Corps Language Coordinators for ways to make individual conversations easier to use and more effective:

- Provide topics to both Trainees and community memberson topics (family members, likes and dislikes, daily activities, social activities, occupation) for the interview. Try to set these guidelines while the Trainees and outsiders are together as a group.
- Carefully select community members for understanding the purpose of the conversation and their patience with non-native speakers.

• Since conversation participants are usually non-PC staff, try to provide tea or coffee and refreshments for them.
• Review with outsiders the assessment criteria for the conversation.
• Allow time for feedback as a group on the results and reactions to the individual conversations. Remember that reactions will be different, depending on the Trainee.
• Instruct Trainees on the cross-cultural features of courtesy, salutations and leave-takings.
• Keep times appropriate; a few minutes is enough! At the beginning of PST, 15 minutes is sufficient. Later, one half hour is enough.
• Stay out of the conversations; let the Trainees handle it!

HOW TO DO IT

COMMUNITY CONTACT ASSIGNMENTS

USING APPLICATION ACTIVITIES FOR ASSESSMENT

Applying what one has been practicing in the classroom to a real-world situation is an essential part of language-learning. Section 4 of this Resource Kit (Materials Development) provides specific recommendations about including out-of-class activities or *applications* for each language lesson. Turning language practice activities into assessment activities merely requires applying principles of Peace Corps Assessment: making sure you have developed a systematic system for giving trainees feedback on their performance (and getting their own self- assessment, too). In task-focused activities, the feedback may consist of whether or not the Trainee was able to get the object or information that was required. In Section 8 (PST) you can find further descriptions of design criteria and suggestions on organizing different kinds of community contact assignments, as well as specific examples from the field.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

Peace Corps Language Coordinators suggest these ways to make community contact assignments easier to use and more effective as assessment techniques:

- Notify community members of the assignment, their role and offer suggestions or guidelines. (e.g., speak in target language).
- Review procedures with Trainees.
- Review any accompanying self-assessment activities with the Trainees after the community contact activity.
- Provide feedback to community members on the results and thank them for their help.

HOW
TO DO IT

PORTFOLIOS

WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?

Usually associated with artists, a portfolio is a collection of work samples that represents the wide range of things an artist is able to do, such as realistic oil paintings, commercial drawings and water-color designs. For Peace Corps language programs, a portfolio kept during PST is an excellent way for language teachers and PC Trainees to keep track of progress throughout the program. Portfolios allow language trainers to record progress of their students throughout PST, and even IST, and may help to predict a Trainee's rating on the PC LPI.

WHAT DO YOU KEEP IN A PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio is not an assessment but a way of recording and referring to other forms of assessment we have discussed throughout the PST. A portfolio might include some or all of the following:

- Samples of Trainee's homework assignments;
- Trainer's weekly or daily logs on Trainee's progress;
- Trainee journal entries on language progress;
- Trainee reflections and trainer's notes on classroom work;
- Trainee self-assessments on community contact activities;
- Trainer checklist on Trainee performance on simulations;
- Trainee self assessments on simulations;
- Trainer observations of Trainees in classroom situations (role-plays, speaking with other Trainees, communicating with the trainer);
- Other Trainee self-assessments;
- Results of the Practice PC LPI;
- Results of the end of PST LPI.

HOW DO YOU KEEP A PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio can include tapes, paper records, pictures or any other way of showing how Trainees' language has progressed. One way to keep all the information together is a folder. If tapes are used, the tapes can be kept in a central location (so they aren't lost), and a paper describing what is on the tape (a PC LPI or practice LPI, a tape of a role play in class, a tape of a Trainee in a simulation) can be kept in the folder.

WHAT ARE SOME USES FOR A PORTFOLIO?

• The primary use of the portfolio is to help the language trainer and the Trainee to regularly review the Trainee's accomplishments in learning the language.
• A portfolio kept throughout PST can show both the language trainer and Trainee how much progress has been made during PST.
• It can also show how important the different assessment tasks used in class -- role-plays, simulations, other activities -- are in helping Trainees learn the language.
• A portfolio can also provide the language trainer with information about Trainee progress during PST to share with the Language Coordinator. Therefore, a portfolio can be used for evaluation of language trainers and of the whole PST (see also the section on the PST evaluation).

HOW CAN VOLUNTEERS USE PORTFOLIOS TO KEEP TRACK OF PROGRESS DURING THEIR PC SERVICE?

Trainees can also keep track of their own progress during PST and throughout their Peace Corps service by reviewing self-assessment forms, their PC LPI scores at the end of PST and after one year of service (at posts where the PC LPI is administered at ISTs) and by working with tutors to look at their progress

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

Language Coordinators have the following suggestions for maximizing the effectiveness of portfolios in the assessment process:
• Include important documents that indicate a Trainee's proficiency.
• Don't try to include everything
• Include self assessments/competency checklists; teacher assessments/ competency checklists; simulation/role play scores, tape recording, writing samples, Practice LPI scores and any other important information.
• Share information with Trainee.
• Encourage Trainees to participate in the portfolio and to contribute to it.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

LANGUAGE LEARNING PORTFOLIO

The Czech Republic developed this description of the portfolio system they developed for use in their PSTs.

Language Learning Portfolio

A Language Learning Portfolio was set up for each Trainee to help them monitor their own progress. Various results of the Trainee's work were filed in a big envelope which was made available to the trainees for perusal. The Trainees then took it with them to their site.

The following items were part of the portfolio:

- results of Trainees' language learning inventory
- the Trainee's expectations
- results of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)
- results of written review exercises
- tape with recording of the trainee's speech
- other work that the Trainee wants to include

HOW TO DO IT

ADMINISTERING THE PRACTICE LPI

USING THE LPI FOR INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Because the PC LPI carries so much weight for PST, many posts administer a Practice LPI (also called a Mock LPI) once or twice during PST. The purposes of this Practice LPI include:

- **Practice for Trainees.** To avoid nervousness on the final LPI and to help Trainees become accustomed to the LPI format, Trainees are administered the LPI under similar conditions to the final LPI. This procedure helps them to prepare for the structure of the final LPI.
- **Feedback to Trainees.** A Practice LPI allows Trainees to find out their LPI rating before it carries any real weight. After receiving their rating, the Trainee can work with their LI on specific proficiency issues.
- **Feedback for LI.** LIs also need feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching. A Practice LPI will help them to see how proficient the Trainees in their class are becoming.
- **Evaluation.** At posts where Trainees are required to reach a certain proficiency level before being sent to the field, the Practice LPI allows all parties- Trainees, LC, LI- to reflect on the progress needed to reach this level, as well as to gauge progress between the Practice LPI and the final LPI.

The Practice LPI should not be given until at least one month to six or eight weeks into PST. Halfway through PST (about 6 weeks) is ideal, because Trainees still have a great deal of time to effect progress.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

- Schedule testers during Pre-PST.
- Ensure that there are sufficient rooms for quiet, uninterrupted interviews.
- Review purposes and procedures with trainers and Trainees.
- Provide sufficient tapes and tape recorders for Practice LPI.
- Tape the Practice LPIs for more feedback .
- Remind Trainees this is just practice activity, not evaluation.
- Share testers' notes with Trainees.
- Provide results to trainers and Trainees.
- Explain results; don't just give rating.

OVER VIEW

INTRODUCTION TO THE PEACE CORPS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW

FORMAL ASSESSMENT AND THE LPI

This section addresses the formal assessment measure used by Peace Corps: the Peace Corps Language Proficiency Interview, or PC LPI. In the CD ROM, we have included information about preparing for a PC LPI tester training workshop.

• This formal assessment measure is administered at the end of the PST to determine the level of speaking proficiency that Trainees have achieved. During the PST, many informal assessment activities can be used to help trainers and Trainees see a general picture of Trainees' proficiency. Some posts even administer a Practice PC LPI a few weeks before the final LPI to help trainers and Trainees become accustomed to the procedures.

WHAT IS THE LPI?

The PC LPI is a face-to-face interview conducted by a certified PC LPI interviewer. It is always audio taped in case of a rating dispute.

USING THE LPI WITH OTHER ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

It is recommended that posts use a set of criteria, and not just the LPI, for a final assessment of the Trainee's proficiency. This might include a score on the LPI, the Practice LPI, a teacher assessment, a technical language task assessment or an assessment of a portfolio kept throughout the PST. If multiple measures such as this are used for final evaluation of a Trainee, it is very important to keep good records. It is also important to have consistent procedures. For example, at some posts, the LPI is weighted for 50% of this final evaluation and the other measures might contribute 10%, 20% and so on, based on the post's decision on what is important for the post. An example can be found in the CD ROM of how Ecuador rates the different components on which a Trainee is evaluated at the end of PST.

Please carefully read all materials on the PC LPI. Some information may be different from that provided in the past.

HOW TO DO IT

PEACE CORPS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW

WHAT IS THE PEACE CORPS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW?

The Peace Corps Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) is a 5- to 30-minute conversation between a Peace Corps-certified tester and a Peace Corps Volunteer. The LPI is usually conducted by one tester, although sometimes two testers are present. When there are two testers, one conducts the interview and the second primarily listens and takes notes.

WHY DO WE ADMINISTER THE PEACE CORPS LPI?

The purpose of the LPI is to determine the oral proficiency level of Peace Corps Trainees and Volunteers in the language or languages in which they have been trained.
The results of the Peace Corps LPI can do the following:
- inform Trainees or Volunteers of their progress in the language(s);
- provide information to the Language Coordinator of the program's success in language training;
- provide information on the program as a part of a program evaluation.

WHO ADMINISTERS THE LPI?

Peace Corps LPI-certified testers administer the LPI only to Trainees and Volunteers. Testers become certified by participating in a four- or five-day workshop, sponsored by Peace Corps Washington. This workshop, which is conducted by a Peace Corps LPI tester trainer, focuses on administering and rating the LPI. All LPIs are tape recorded.

WHY IS THE PC LPI TAPE RECORDED?

PC LPIs are tape recorded for both feedback to the Volunteer and as documentation in case of a rating dispute by the Volunteer. The PC LPI tape can provide information to Volunteers on their progress in the language if they compare interviews conductred at different times in their service. In case of a rating dispute, the tape can be rated by a second rater (The Language Coordinator or the PC Washington Language Coordinator should always be contacted in case of a rating dispute). The LPI tape is stored for two years or throughout the Volunteer's service, whichever is longer.

WHO CERTIFIES THE PEACE CORPS LPI TESTERS?

Each Peace Corps tester training workshop is conducted by a Peace Corps LPI tester trainer. Workshop participants must meet certain criteria to be certified. First, they must attend all workshop sessions. In addition, certified testers must demonstrate their rating ability by accurately rating ten sample tapes. They must also submit two practice LPI interviews which are reviewed by the tester trainer for appropriateness. All the criteria are reviewed by an LPI Tester Review Committee. Participants are notified by letter if they are certified.

WHEN IS THE PEACE CORPS LPI ADMINISTERED?

The Peace Corps LPI is administered to Trainees at the end of Pre-Service Training. It can also be administered after one year of service and at close of service.

HOW LONG DOES CERTIFICATION LAST?

Certification is valid for four years from the date of certification or until the next tester training is held for a post. At this time, testers are required to participate in the tester trainer workshop . If a workshop is held for the post and a formerly certified tester does not attend or is not certified, then certification lapses and the tester can no longer administer the LPI.

WHAT DOES CERTIFICATION MEAN?

Certification allows the Peace Corps LPI tester to conduct Peace Corps LPI with Peace Corps Trainees and Volunteers. It does not certify testers to conduct official interviews with others. However, the techniques testers learn during the Peace Corps LPI tester training workshop are often helpful for testers who also teach languages. Testers who are language teachers are encouraged to apply what they have learned to assess their own students, but they cannot receive any official score report or certification.

HOW OFTEN ARE TESTER TRAINING WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED?

Each year, approximately three workshops are conducted in each region. Therefore, tester training workshops are conducted approximately every four years at posts. This training time corresponds with the length of time of certification. Because of limited funds and the logistics of scheduling complementary workshops in a region, sometimes workshops are not held every four years. In such cases, the language tester coordinator can extend certification if it is requested.

HOW CAN I REQUEST A TESTER TRAINING WORKSHOP?

Because workshops are a part of the IPBS process, the country-wide plan and the Regional plans, it is important to work with the Country Director and other staff at post to alert them that a tester training is needed.
The following are good reasons to request a Peace Corps/LPI tester training workshop:

- Certification has lapsed or will lapse during the year;

• Sufficient certified testers are no longer available for testing.

Planning for a tester training workshop should be part of the post's yearly plan. Language Coordinators should work with other staff at post to request tester training during the year before tester training will be needed.

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT PEACE CORPS LPI TESTER TRAINING OR PEACE CORPS LPI?

All questions about Peace Corps tester training or the Peace Corps LPI should be directed to the Peace Corps Language Testing Coordinator in Washington DC.

USEFUL INFORMATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PC LPI AND LPI TESTER TRAINING

WHAT IS THE PEACE CORPS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (LPI) TESTER TRAINING PROGRAM?

The Peace Corps LPI Tester Training Program trains language teachers and specialists to give the Peace Corps LPI to Volunteers at the end of Pre-Service Training, during service and at the close of service. This program consists of a four-or five- day workshop during which workshop participants learn about the Peace Corps LPI and the scale used to rate the Peace Corps LPI. During the workshop, participants both observe and practice administering and rating the LPI.
From 1969 until October, 1996, the LPI Tester Training Program was carried out through a contract with the Educational Testing Service. The Peace Corps LPI Tester Training Program, including tester training workshops and the collection and organization of Volunteer testing scores is now housed at Peace Corps Washington. All information should be forwarded to the Language Testing Coordinator at Peace Corps Washington.

WHAT IS THE PEACE CORPS LPI?

The purpose of the Peace Corps LPI is to determine the oral proficiency level of Peace Corps Volunteers. The Peace Corps LPI usually consists of a 5- 30 minute conversation, during which the Peace Corps-certified interviewer determines the level of speaking skill of the interviewee. The interview has several parts, including a warm-up and questions designed to probe for a participant s proficiency level. The interview is recorded so that the interviewer can review it, if needed. The Peace Corps LPI is rated according to the ACTFL Guidelines, a scale which describes a Volunteer's language proficiency.

WHAT ARE THE ACTFL GUIDELINES?

Peace Corps has used the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines to rate the Peace Corps LPI since 1989. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines use five assessment criteria: Functions, Context,

Content, Accuracy and Text Type. These criteria are used to assess the language demonstrated by Volunteers during the Peace Corps LPI. These criteria are holistic, however; in other words, a Volunteer's score is based on the overall performance and not on one criterion.

The ACTFL scale has four major levels, Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Superior. The Novice, Intermediate and Advanced levels also have sub-levels: Novice-Low, Novice-Mid, Novice-High; Intermediate-Low, Intermediate-Mid, Intermediate-High; and Advanced and Advanced-High. Workshop participants learn the detailed descriptions for each level, listen to audiocassette samples at each level, and watch videos of Peace Corps LPI performances at each level.

HOW IS THE LPI DIFFERENT FROM TRAINING RECEIVED ON THE FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE (FSI) RATING SCALE?

For a number of years, the spoken language proficiency of Peace Corps Trainees and Volunteers was assessed according to the language interview developed by the Foreign Service Institute in Washington, DC. Until 1969, FSI staff administered most Volunteer interviews. In 1969, Peace Corps contracted with the Educational Testing Service to assume responsibility for the language proficiency interview testing program and the training of Peace Corps staff and language teachers to administer the FSI interviews to Volunteers. In the 1980s, an academic rating scale parallel to the FSI scale, the ACTFL Guidelines, was developed.

The ACTFL Guidelines have been used by Peace Corps since 1989.The FSI scale is slightly different from the ACTFL scale. The FSI interview evaluates the interviewee's mastery of specific linguistic areas: Pronunciation and Accent, Grammatical Accuracy, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Listening Comprehension, compared to the ACTFL levels described in Question 3. Scoring is based on a six-point numerical system, with 0 as the lowest score and 5 the highest score. Each of the six levels has a specific description which helps the tester to decide which category best describes the interviewee's interview performance. A supplementary rating system was also adopted to allow for the considerable increase from one numeric category to the next highest one. Each category score except five was modified to include a plus (for example, 1+, 2+, etc.) to show that the interviewee's proficiency exceeds the minimum requirements for the category but does not reach the next higher category.

WHO ARE THE TESTER TRAINERS?

The tester trainers, who carry out the tester training workshops, are college and university professors or language professionals in the United States and Canada. The trainers are certified to conduct workshops on the Peace Corps LPI and have conducted workshops on the ACTFL Guidelines. The trainers for the Peace Corps tester training workshop are usually contractors for Peace Corps.

WHAT RATING SCALE IS USED FOR THE LPI?

The ACTFL scale is used in the Peace Corps LPI workshop. During the workshop, participants review the rating scale, the differences between levels and interviewing techniques. Detailed descriptions are also included in the training manual.

WHY IS THE TERM ACTFL USED IN THE TRAINING ?

The term ACTFL is used in the Peace Corps LPI tester training workshop to identify the rating scale used in the workshop. This scale is also used by ACTFL in their certification workshops.

HOW DOES ACTFL OPI CERTIFICATION DIFFER FROM PEACE CORPS CERTIFICATION?

Peace Corps certification is the certification received by individuals who participate in the Peace Corps Language Tester Training Workshop and successfully meet the certification criteria for the program. ACTFL certification is granted to participants of ACTFL-sponsored workshops who successfully complete the certification criteria for the ACTFL organization. It is important to note that participants will receive Peace Corps LPI certification and not ACTFL certification.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LPI AND THE OPI?

The Peace Corps Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) is used to describe the interview and rating used in Peace Corps as opposed to the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) which is used to describe the interview and rating for ACTFL purposes. The distinction is necessary to acknowledge and reflect the differences in the training and certification needs and procedures of language interviewers/testers trained at Peace Corps sites from those trained by ACTFL for application within the American academic community. The OPI procedure seeks to probe global language proficiency skills in a wide range of language contexts. The Peace Corps LPI also seeks to probe global language proficiency skills, but within the language content and context areas relevant to Peace Corps activities and work tasks. Therefore, the context for and content of the Peace Corps LPI is different than that of the OPI and the two interviews are not necessarily identical. The scale used to rate both interviews, however, is identical.

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR PEACE CORPS CERTIFICATION?

Peace Corps LPI workshop participants are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Attendance at and participation in the workshop;
- Performance on the practice interviews during the workshop;
- Accuracy in rating the ten testing tapes of taped interviews;
- Evaluation of interview structure, elicitation techniques and rating reliability on two tape-recorded interviews conducted by the participant and submitted to the trainer by the end of the last day of the workshop.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO FIND OUT ABOUT CERTIFICATION?

The amount of time for notification of participants' certification varies, depending on the schedule of the trainer who travels to the country to conduct the workshop. Certification decisions will not be made until two weeks after the tester trainer returns to the United States. All participants are notified through personal letters. All letters are sent to the Country Director of the Peace Corps post via diplomatic pouch (which can take from two to six weeks). Therefore, it may take about two months for participants to receive notification.

HOW ARE CERTIFICATION DECISIONS MADE?

Certification decisions are made by a Review Committee consisting of the Language Testing Coordinator and two language experts who consider suggestions made by the tester trainer. Certification is based on the criteria listed in Question 10, above.

IN HOW MANY LANGUAGES CAN A PARTICIPANT BE CERTIFIED?

A tester can be certified in as many as five languages, as long as the Language Coordinator can verify that the tester is proficient in all the languages listed. (The tester trainer, in most cases, will not be able to verify a participant's language proficiency in local languages.)

CAN PARTICIPANTS ADMINISTER THE PC LPI IN ENGLISH OR OTHER LANGUAGES IN WHICH THEY HAVE NOT BEEN CERTIFIED?

Testers cannot be certified to test in English. Testers can be certified to test in up to five languages but can test only in the languages in which they have been certified to test.

CAN TESTERS TEST PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS?

Testers cannot officially test individuals who are not Peace Corps Volunteers. Testers who are teachers are certainly encouraged to apply what they have learned for evaluations of their own students, but they cannot receive official score reports or certificates.

HOW LONG DOES CERTIFICATION LAST?

Certification is valid for four years from the date of certification. At the end of this time, testers are encouraged to participate in the next tester training workshop.

IF A PARTICIPANT IS NOT CERTIFIED AFTER A WORKSHOP, WHAT CAN THE PARTICIPANT DO TO RECEIVE CERTIFICATION LATER?

To be certified at a later time, participants who are not certified must participate in another tester training workshop and meet the criteria when another tester training workshop is offered in the region.

HOW CAN CERTIFIED TESTERS BE RECERTIFIED?

Peace Corps recommends that all certified testers carefully review the training manual and training tapes and discuss the scale and interview techniques with other certified testers during the three-year certification. Peace Corps also recommends that all certified testers participate in the refresher workshops offered by many sites on an annual basis. After certification lapses, testers must participate in another language testing workshop when offered at the site.

CAN THE PEACE CORPS LPI BE CONDUCTED WITH TWO TESTERS INSTEAD OF ONE? IF SO, HOW?

The Peace Corps LPI can be conducted with two testers, pending approval from the Country Director. The first tester would conduct the interview and the second tester would observe and take notes on the testing technique (to offer feedback to the first tester on the performance). The second tester can participate in a role play situation, if appropriate. The two testers can then consult with each other before determining the interviewee's rating. Please note that the Peace Corps LPI is just as effective if conducted with just one tester.

CAN PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS USE PEACE CORPS LPI RATINGS IN THE UNITED STATES TO OBTAIN COLLEGE CREDIT?

Peace Corps Volunteers should contact the college or university of their choice to see if the institution will accept an LPI rating for credit or exemption from specific language courses. Volunteers need to have records of their score via the official signed score report or written verification from the Country Director.